

Prabuddha Bharata

Arise! Awake! and stop not till the goal is reached.

—Sri Sri Virkananda

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

JNANA AND BHAKTI

THE Knowledge of God may be likened to a man while the Love of God is like a woman. Knowledge has entry only to the outer rooms of God, but no one can enter into the inner mysteries of God save a lover, for none but a woman has access into the harem.

THE Jnana-Yogi indeed wants to realise Brahman—God Impersonal, the Absolute and the Unconditioned.

What is meant is that as a general rule such a person would in this age do better to love, pray, and surrender himself entirely to God. The Lord loves His devotee and will vouchsafe unto him even Brahma-Jnana if the Bhakta hungers and thirsts after it.

Thus the Jnana-Yogi will attain Jnana as well as Bhakti. It will be given to him to realise Brahman. He will, the Lord willing, also realise the Personal God of the Bhakta.

The Bhakta, on the other hand, would as a general rule be quite content with seeing, realising the Personal God, the Saguna Brahman of the Upanishads. The Lord would, however, make him

the heir of His infinite glories—grant unto him Bhakti as well as Jnana—give him to realise God Personal as well as God Impersonal.

For does not a person who manages to reach Calcutta succeed in finding his way to the Maidan, the (Ochterlony) Monument, the Museum and other places and know which is which?

Do but come to my Divine Mother and you will get not only Bhakti but also Jnana; if you like—not only see Her in Bhava-Samadhi manifesting Herself in Forms Divine (*Sākāra-Rupā*), but also realise Her as Brahman the Absolute in Nirvikalpa-Samadhi in which self is effaced and there is no manifestation of Divine Forms (*Virākāra-Rupā*).

A JNANI and a Bhakta were once passing through a forest. On their way they saw a tiger at a distance. The Jnani said, "There is no reason why we should flee; the Almighty God will certainly protect us." At this the Bhakta said, "No, brother, come let us run away. Why should we trouble the Lord for what can be accomplished by our own exertions?"

BRAHMAN AND ISHVARA

EVERY object is the form of a substance. The table is a form of the substance, wood. The universe consists of objects material, mental and spiritual. We see material objects through five senses. The mental objects are the thoughts and the spiritual the souls. Though we do not see them at present, we shall do so when other faculties of perception will open. It is said that there is one substance of which all the objects of the universe are forms, as tables are of wood. That one substance is the Brahman of the Advaita Vedanta.

Our perception of an object consists in the perception of another object as its substance with a form. Perception of an object, table, consists in the perception of another object, wood, as its substance with the table form. Sometimes the perception of the form may be more definite than that of the substance; at other times, the perception of the substance may be more definite than that of the form. Again, both the perceptions may be equally definite at the same time. And there are degrees of definiteness of the perceptions. This is a psychological fact which will be evident on a little thought. This difference in the definiteness of the perceptions of the form and the substance, observed when one object is looked upon as the form of another, may reasonably be supposed to occur when that object is looked upon as the form of Brahman,

the one ultimate substance of all objects. Ordinarily the perception of the form is far more definite than that of the ultimate substance, of which the perception is so indefinite that we can hardly formulate it to ourselves. Religious realization of the Advaita Vedanta means an intense definiteness of the latter perception, with or without an equally intense definiteness of the former.

What is the difference between an object, table, and its substance, wood? Certainly, only the table-form. Now we can never think of the table-form as an independent something separate from the wood. Form has therefore no real existence. Nor it is non-existence, seeing that it exists, as objects are perceived with it. Form is, as it were, a shadow round everything and we cannot catch it; we can neither affirm nor deny its existence. It is a mixture of non-existence and existence. The difference between table and wood, consisting as it does only in the table-form, necessarily partakes of the peculiar nature of the form and therefore can neither be said to exist nor not to exist. In other words, table is the same, yet not the same as wood. Likewise, considering Brahman as the ultimate substance of every object, it is the same, yet not the same as Brahman. The well-known Advaita texts, *Tattvamasī*, 'that thou art,' *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahman*, 'all this verily is Brahman,' signify that souls, thoughts and material objects, all are one with Brah-

man in the same sense as table is wood.

Deprive the objects of all their form-making attributes and the residuum, of course formless, will be their ultimate substance. Objects exist; Brahman cannot be said to exist, for that would make it an object. But, being the substance of all existing objects, it can be said to be existence itself. Souls are intelligent; Brahman cannot be said to be intelligent, for that would make it a soul. But, being the substance of all intelligent souls, it can be said to be intelligence itself. It is not powerful, but power itself; not blissful, but bliss itself; not loving, but love itself.

The question why the formless takes the forms cannot be answered. The answer that they are due to Maya only drives the question a point further,—why the formless becomes associated with the form-making Maya? An Advaitist had better admit his inability, rather than attempt, to explain the inexplicable.

Concepts imply correlatives. The conception of a part is impossible without that of a whole. There can be no conception of equality without one of inequality, of finiteness without one of infiniteness. In the same manner, man being a being possessed of limited knowledge and power, his conception of himself as such is possible only by opposition to that of a being possessed of unlimited knowledge and power. As he can, on no account, eradicate the conception of his self as a limited being, he can, on no account, eradicate the correlative conception of an unlimited being. The latter conception may be more or less indefinite, but, at all times, remains with him as a positive element

of thought. It need hardly be pointed out that every conception is caused by, and is impossible without, a corresponding thing in the real world. True, we can have the conception of an unreal being, centaur, but that conception is formed only by combining the conceptions caused by real things, man and horse. We know definitely only limited things. Certainly no manner of manipulation of the conceptions caused by limited things can give rise to the conception of an unlimited being. We are therefore forced to admit the existence of a being possessed of unlimited knowledge and power, causing and making possible this conception. Only, our consciousness of him is generally indefinite. Two individuals can differ only by limiting each other some way; otherwise they are one. Therefore there can be only one unlimited being, for more than one beings would limit one another and therefore none of them could be unlimited. He is the Personal God, the Universal Soul, the Ishvara of Advaitism.

Besides, we observe gradations of manifestation of knowledge and power in the beings inhabiting our planet. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, none can tell that the innumerable celestial bodies, visible and invisible, are not inhabited by beings manifesting far greater knowledge and power than ours and that the manifestation does not go on becoming greater and greater till it reaches unlimitedness in an unlimited being. Add to this the evidence of the sages of all countries and ages, men ideally pure, unselfish and truthful, actuated with the sole motive to do good

to the world, who declare to have perceived Him, why, even to have relations with Him as their father, mother, master, friend and what not, nay, even in a far more intense sense than we perceive and have relations with our earthly relatives and we cannot at all understand how one can deny the existence of Ishvara.

Ishvara is the highest form of Brahman. An infinite variety of articles can be made out of wood. As wood they are all one; but as formed articles and so long as the forms remain, they are different. A wood-pencil is not the same as a wood-table, though, substantially, they are identical as wood. Ishvara, individual souls and Nature comprising matter and mind are all forms of the substance, Brahman, and therefore, as substance, they are all identical; but, as forms, they are certainly different and neither an individual soul nor Nature is ever the same as Ishvara.

Every unit is composed of other units, yet it is a unit separate from them. A book consists of many units, the leaves, yet it is a unit, the book, that is not the same as the leaves. Every living organism, man, animal or bird, consists. physiology tells us, of innumerable cells. The cells are themselves each an individual. A living organism therefore is composed of many individuals, the cells, yet it is an individual, a man, an animal or a bird as the case may be, evidently separate from them. In the same manner, Ishvara, being the highest individual, is composed of all the individuals of the universe, yet He is an individual separate from them. His body is the

universe taken as a whole.

Ishvara is the absolute master of limitations. He is not under the conditions of existence, time, place and causation; these are under Him. No hard and fast rules can be laid down as conditions for gaining His grace. He is beyond rules. Prayers may move Him or may not. The most earnest soul may struggle his whole life to see Him, yet see nothing; He may reveal Himself to one who never cared to think of Him. Such an Ishvara may seem to man a veritable madman; but, admitting the unconditional freedom of His nature, he cannot certainly bring Him within the domain of rules and conditions. Devotion to such an Ishvara is possible only in the most unselfish heart. He alone who expects nothing can love Him from whom nothing can be expected with certainty.

SRUTI

—
Truth is within ourselves;
it takes no rise
From outward things,
whate'er you may believe.
There is an inmost centre in us all,
Where truth abides in fulness;
and around,
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,
This perfect, clear perfection—
which is truth.
A baffling and perverted carnal mesh
Binds it, and makes all error;
and to *know*
Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendour may
escape,
Than in effecting entry for a light
Supposed to be without.
—*Browning.*

MISSIONARY HOPES

IN an English Missionary Journal called "All Nations," there is a very interesting and able article headed "RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN INDIA DURING THE LAST DECADE." The writer, an Indian Missionary, has been a close observer and student of these movements of the last two decades. He has been following the various phases of the great ferment of thought and unsettlement of belief that have resulted from the contact of the knowledge and ideas of the West with those of the East. In regard to the attitude towards Christianity he says, at the commencement of the decade "the religious indifference, the stolid apathy with which Hindus had for years regarded the steady advance of Christianity had gradually given place to a strong and organized opposition." To the negative defence afforded by Bradlaugh's and Ingersoll's tracts were added the aggressive foreign weapons of propaganda, "we began to see pamphlets and journals devoted to the defence and diffusion of the Hindu faith." In short Hinduism is thoroughly on the alert now and not prepared to allow itself to be starved into capitulation. Through the mouth of their most respectable organs we have the answer of the most advanced Hindus to Missionary hopes. "If Hinduism is undergoing change, so is Christianity. Belief in one God, purity in thought and action, and charity in social relations are after all the base and bottom of all religion, and are becoming the only religion of ever-expanding cultured communities.

At this point all religions meet; here they are all one." We have a still more decided attitude, "*The Arya* a new champion of Hinduism.....which has elected to give up the defensive and to attack Christianity on its own ground, the Editor beginning by assailing the central fact of the New Testament—the Resurrection of Christ." The writer in "All Nations," of course, believes that the Hindu Social Reform Associations and Conferences that have been started during the decade are the indirect result of Christian principles. Missionary-like he is also very optimistic as to the final triumph of Christianity over Hinduism and can foresee the time "when the men of the distant future stand before the grave of a dead Hinduism."

Unprejudiced observers of the changes that have come over the country as the result of the contact with Western civilisation, history, politics and science, will be able to see through the speciousness of the able writer's presentation of the effects of the contact with Christianity. The Hindu may be astonished at Railways, Telegraphs and Motor cars, at the great strides made by Western nations in manufactures and industries and all the other results of the application of physical laws, of which his ancestors knew nothing. But he cannot be expected to stand aghast with astonishment at the religion of the Westerns. In this region there is hardly anything essential that the European can teach him. His ancestors plunged more deeply into the *Science* of the soul than have

the Europeans done even into the science of material things, of which they may rightly boast. India is itself the ancient land of spirituality. No wonder therefore that the writer above quoted remarks "Though a new religious spirit is without doubt abroad.....it must be allowed that the revival movement itself is due more to intellectual and national pride than to deep spirituality ...and...a patriotic attempt to harmonize its higher ideals with those of Christianity." The missionary can see that there is a national spirit which is felt to be sufficient of itself to guide the Hindus in their future path of religious progress, but he is unable to reconcile that knowledge with his preconceived notions of spirituality. His attitude reminds us of that of certain Galileans towards Jesus as described in Mark, chapter 6th (Ferrar Fenton's *New Testament in Modern English*), "Where has He obtained this? and What is the Wisdom given to Him? and How can such results come from His hands?" The missionary with his ideas of a single revelation made at a single period of time, and his exclusive ideas of God and the soul cannot understand how others hold the essential divinity of human beings everywhere. It is a wonder to him when other people say, Yes, we also know something of spirituality; of God, of the soul and of the divine in man—the light which enlighteneth every man coming into the world. We are glad to hear that you have a saviour too. We have had several and we can understand that all men should stand in need of them. We are not surprised to hear of your saviour and you need not press

upon us to recognize Him as our especial saviour, for if you will look into the question more carefully you will find that there is only a shadow of a difference between us in regard to our saviours. You Christians as well as we can but claim to say 'By Him whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by means of Him, this man now stands quite well before you. This Man is the Stone despised by you, the Builders, which has become the chief keystone. And there is salvation by no other; for there is not another name under heaven given among men, by which we can be saved' (*Acts*, chap. 4th—same translation). It is not we but, you who fail to see this in its true sense."

The writer contends that "The fatal weakness of Vedantism.....is that there is no clearly-defined moral law, and no Sermon on the mount, and no gracious and Redeeming Personality, to purge and quicken the conscience, and guide and inspire the lives and practices of the people," but he quotes also the opinions of Prof. Max Muller and other authorities in the West that the Vedanta, "while being the most sublime philosophy, is also the most satisfying religion"; and that "in its unfalsified form, it is the strongest support of pure morality, and the greatest consolation in the sufferings of life and death."

Hinduism like Christianity is the embodiment of a sublime and universal idea and all that those who are really anxious for the regeneration of the country have to do is to draw out of the stores of Hindu religion those aspects which will render it "an applied and

sacred science for the uplifting of the oppressed and outcast" and a "force making for righteousness." The message of Jesus came to the Western world for its enlightenment, having been prepared before the coming of the nations on the stage of History (Luke II, 31); similarly earlier races had their saviours. If the India of to-day, in the estimation of the missionaries, shows no signs of the purifying influences of its ancient faiths, no more does modern Europe afford a very striking illustration of the peaceful gospel of the divine teacher who taught men to "give the other cheek." As for that which makes for righteousness among men, there is more of it in this country than in Europe as the prison and criminal statistics, we believe, prove.

The light that is in Christianity is a light that lightens *every man* coming into

the world. It must be reflected therefore in the religion of the Hindus as it is in that of the Christians. All that we have to do is to remove where needed the obstacles which prevent its shining attaining the standard of brilliance demanded by the present times. That is the task for the pious Hindu—the regeneration of Hinduism, not the impossible task of its destruction. This great work is now being done, as the missionary writer himself has observed, all over India. True Religion is true human life, not the domination of a particular creed; and that is the religion of Jesus the Christ. If Hindus are true to the good that is in their religion, they have nothing to fear from Missionary Christianity—the Saviour appeals to each through his own Faith.

A CHRISTIAN

THE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION AT CALCUTTA

SPEECH BY MR. N. N. GHOSH

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I sincerely sympathise with the promoters of this meeting in their desire to commemorate the life and work of Swami Vivekananda. I am not sure, however, that annual meetings are the best mode of commemoration. They have a tendency, after a short time, to degenerate into a mere formality. Once started they ought not to be given up. But there is a difficulty in keeping up their freshness and significance. However that may be, there is no doubt that Swami Vivekananda deserves commemoration. His work has been of exceptional value, and he has a special claim to our grateful

remembrance. No Bengalee has done so much to interpret Hindu philosophy and religion to the Western mind, or to vindicate them against unworthy prejudices. He was an exponent of Vedantism. That system of thought was expounded by him not merely as a Philosophy but also and essentially as a Religion. The expositions are accurate in substance and are finished literary productions. The Swami did not believe in a religion of mere *deshachara*. At the same time he employed Vedantism in no militant way to expose or explode Hinduism, but he identified it with that religion. In interpreting Vedantism, he was doing the work of a

champion and apostle of Hinduism, and not of an assailant and seceder, nor even of a critic and reformer. The Vedanta was to him the *rationalis* of the Hindu creed. In it he saw the principle that was to unify the varieties of its modern aspect. He preached it not as a gospel of quietism or of universal asceticism, but as a religion of love, and therefore, for householders at any rate, of active duty. In his view it was to be the great unifying and regenerating principle for the entire Hindu race, opening the minds of men to the essential oneness of their faith and stimulating them to exertions of beneficence. He saw in Vedantism a religion that was destined to conquer the world by reason of its unsectarian, catholic character, by the profundity of its basic truths, eternal as life and mind. Amongst those who have expounded the Eastern creed in a Western language, I am not aware of one more sound, more refined and more impressive. His writings and speeches are the most popular exposition of Vedantism that I am aware of. I say 'popular' not by way of reproach. They are singularly free from pedantry, from metaphysic verbiage. They are plain and direct. They anticipate popular objections and answer them. They shirk no difficulties; leave no corners obscure. And, what is most remarkable of all, is that the Swami lived the life he preached. He was at once a Yogi and a man of action. He had renounced the world, but no man could be more brave or adventurous in doing his duty, in raising his countrymen and diffusing the Eastern

light over countries it had not yet penetrated. His schemes of beneficence were the logical outcome of his creed.

How should we commemorate such a man? Either by holding meetings like this and talking of his life, his character and his work; or by developing institutions like this students' home embodying the very principles of his work. Another suitable mode would be a memorial edition of his writings and speeches. They ought to be popularised. If possible they ought to be in every Hindu home where English can be read. At present, I regret to say, they are not generally well known and not easily accessible. But after all the best memorial of a man is men. Great men live through their disciples, the men who keep up their traditions, follow their examples and continue their work. True Christians are the best memorial of Jesus Christ. Swami Vivekananda was the greatest memorial of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. That saint and sage now lives on in his other disciples. And the best memorial of Vivekananda would be a band of men inspired by his principles, fired by his zeal, imitating his qualifications and carrying on his work. If even a fraction of the young men assembled here to-day, boarders in an institution associated with his name and assisting in this work of commemoration, were to be or to seek to be, each in his own way, a little Vivekananda, religious, unselfish, heroically dutiful to his creed and country like the Swami, they would be a living memorial, more real, more significant, more serviceable, than bronze or marble.

ENGLAND

THE object of *England*, a book of 184 pages by J. Nelson Fraser, M. A., Professor of English literature, Deccan College, Poona, published by the Christian Literature Society for India, Madras,* is to place before the educated Indian reader an account of English Society in the present day. The importance of the creation of a feeling of oneness between the ruling and the ruled conducive to the well-being of both cannot be exaggerated and nothing helps more to create such feeling than their correct understanding of each other. We thank Mr. Fraser for this interesting work which, by its lucid treatment of various matters, omitting nothing of great importance, pointing out as honestly and carefully the faults of the national character and the defects in the national institutions as anything else, furnishes in a popular form, much useful general information to the Indian reader about his ruling-race. We give below mostly in the language of the author an abridgment of its contents.

The climate of England is seldom hot enough to encourage laziness, and rarely cold enough, though sometimes wet enough, to drive people indoors. There is none of the really grand scenery of the world, though the Westmoreland Lakes and the Devonshire and Cornwall coasts are beautiful. The landscape, as a rule, is smaller than that of India, and bounded by rolling hills. There is little waste land or jungle and cultivation prevails everywhere. An English house is the place where one family lives. Every

Englishman, as soon as he is married, wishes to have a house to himself, and to have it as private as possible. All classes of the people from the highest to the lowest, love to have gardens near their homes. An average house includes the breakfast-room, the dining-room, the drawing-room and the bed-rooms, with their appropriate furniture. What the Englishman aims at in furnishing his house is comfort, in which the chief element is physical ease removed from elaborate or exciting pleasures as well as from those which unnerve a man and make him lazy or voluptuous. The ordinary dress, both of men and women, is practically the same both in India and England. Correct dress is regarded by all as an important affair; dirtiness and untidiness of apparel are noticed and strongly objected to and there is some attention paid to this even among the labouring classes.

Indian villages, as a rule, stand a little off the road. The road runs straight through the English village, most of the cottages standing facing it on either side. The Church, with a school connected with it, is the conspicuous building in the village. Village sanitation, though primitive, is fairly efficient. Water is mostly drawn from wells, never from tanks or ponds. Unable to secure the farmer against foreign competition, English agriculture is much depressed. It does not attract men of spirit and enterprise and has not been improved in accordance with modern scientific or commercial methods. The more active villagers therefore emigrate or go to the towns. In the small country town, a market is held once a week, at which farm produce, such as butter, eggs, fruit,

Price, paper, as. 8; cloth, as. 12.

fowls, is sold and sometimes sheep and cattle change hands. Passing on to the larger towns, each of them, speaking generally contains three quarters, the industrial where the factories are situated, the business quarter where the chief shops and the public buildings will be found and the rest chiefly made up of dwelling houses. The towns are well drained, well lighted with gas or electricity, well paved and kept thoroughly clean.

The people are usually divided into three classes—upper, middle and lower. The destitute, with no regular income or occupation, who live from hand to mouth have seldom enough to eat and are sometimes brought face to face with starvation, form a fourth class, named the Submerged Tenth. They are found chiefly in the large towns, and depend on casual employment. Besides the English Poor Law System, many religious associations and charitable institutions do what they can to help them. Thus there are in London about forty homes, supporting each from 250 to 1,000 destitute children; and one great institution, Dr. Barnardo's Homes, throughout England, is responsible for about 5,000. The Salvation Army does similar work among adults. We may mention here Toynbee Hall, in London, where a number of Oxford graduates live and spend their leisure time in organising the social life and education of the poor who surround them. How our national conscience is asleep in regard to similar duties in India! The wages of the working classes vary from 10 s. a week to 50 s. Their intelligence is distinctly growing; they read books and newspapers and take a sensible interest in politics. The middle classes include tradesmen, schoolmasters, clergymen, lawyers and doctors. Their views and principles often affect the government of India, though they know very little about it and are seldom seen here except as missionaries. The upper

classes are mainly identical with the families of the great landed proprietors. Landed estates descend without division to the eldest son.

An Englishman is not expected to marry unless his income is large enough to support his wife and family. The choice of a wife is a son's first independent action, but no right-minded young man would marry a daughter against her parents' wishes. As they grow older the boys pass more under the father's control, while the girls are left to the mother's care. The wishes of the wife on all matters regarding the management of the home are usually respected.

The popular amusements generally possess a serious interest and develop physical and mental powers. The chief indoor amusements are dancing, cards and billiards, while the outdoor ones are cricket, football, tennis, golf, and sports such as hunting, racing, shooting, fishing, yacht-racing, pigeon-flying, &c.

It is pretty well recognised that there should be three types of education, elementary, commercial, and liberal, but there is no general agreement as to what subjects each should include and how they should be related to one another. The first should be suitable for boys who leave school at twelve to fourteen years of age to earn their living by manual labour, the second for those who remain at school three or four years longer, and afterwards go into business and the third should be a preparation for the university, suitable for men who will afterwards join the learned profession and speaking generally for all men of leisure and independent means. As the situation stands at present, elementary education is compulsory and has lately been almost entirely free,—a boon which, Heaven only knows, will ever be conferred on India or not. The three R's grammar, geography and history, and

general knowledge in the form of "object lessons," are chiefly taught in the Elementary Schools. The Middle-class Schools aim at commercial and the Public Schools at liberal education. The life in the Public Schools is well-fitted to turn out a certain type of character—a character vigorous and self-reliant but thoroughly disciplined, capable of command but ready to obey. Oxford, Cambridge and Durham possess the old universities. The London and the Victoria Universities are modern. The primary education of girls proceeds on much the same lines as that of boys. There are supporters as well as opponents of higher education of women; the experiment has begun and its success or failure will not be decided in our day.

The commercial and industrial supremacy of England dated from the beginning of the last century. It was due to the natural wealth of the country and to the vigour of its inhabitants, their enterprise, inventive power, and genius for organisation. Statisticians furnish us with estimates of the wealth of England it is hardly possible to believe.

The Army numbers about 220,000 men in the regular forces, of whom 150,000 are infantry, 40,000 cavalry, and 20,000 artillery. Its total cost is about £16,000,000 a year. Besides there is the Auxiliary force of Militia; and a body of 200,000 Volunteers. The Navy includes 55 men-of-war, 126 cruisers and many smaller vessels and torpedo-boats. The principle observed with regard to its size is to keep it equal to any two combined fleets that might be brought against it. In 1893, the money spent on it amounted to £26,500,000. A man-of-war costs nearly £1,000,000 and has a crew of about 600 men.

All public offences are in the first place brought before a magistrate. He is appointed by the central government from the leading

men of the town or country and his office is an honorary one. His powers are limited: serious crimes are tried by the judges at the Assizes, held at large towns twice a year. The prisoner is tried by a jury. There is no actual appeal from this court but the Sovereign on the advice of the Home Secretary, can pardon the prisoner or modify the sentence. The efficiency of the police is very high. From bribery they are practically free and a charge of oppression is not often brought against them. False charges, concocted evidence and collusion with the police are not common. Offences are punishable either by fine or incarceration. Hanging also occurs in the case of convictions for murder. Imprisonment may not exceed two years and varies in severity as it is simple or with hard labour. Penal servitude cannot be less than three, and is generally at least five, years in duration and is undergone at large convict establishments, of which the best known are Portland and Dartmouth.

The supreme government rests, as is well known, with three powers, the Sovereign, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons. The generally accepted view is that the Sovereign reigns but does not govern. To do anything, he has practically to do it through his ministers. If the ministers did not approve of any action he proposed, their duty would be to resign and he would have to find other ministers. It is not supposed that he has any desire to do so, or to carry out his personal wishes in opposition to those of the nation. The people have definitely shown more than once that they do not want a benevolent despotism. The Sovereign initiates nothing and the Royal consent to measures passed through Parliament is a matter of course. The House of Lords is formed of 576 Peers. The dignity of the Peerage is hereditary. The House has no executive powers, and does little in the way

of originating legislation, but all bills require its consent to become law. The Sovereign and the House of Lords, being hereditary, are practically irresponsible; the House of Commons is elective and responsible. It contains 670 members, 465 of whom represent English constituencies. Practically any respectable man may be elected a member and every respectable man above the age of twenty-one has a vote to elect, if he chooses to claim it. The powers of the commons are chiefly legislative. Bills are formally introduced, and in each case the principle of the bill is explained, some discussion follows and a vote is taken; if the bill has a majority, it then passes into a committee of the whole House, where details are discussed, and settled one by one; it then goes up to the House of Lords. On returning it is read a third time, and finally goes up for the Royal assent. The officers who carry on the work of the government are the Ministers of the Crown. But the Commons control these in various ways. The chief officers of the Crown form a body called the Cabinet, who support one another's policy. They are chosen exclusively from one or other of the two great parties of the Parliament that is in power and depend upon it for regular support as long as they are in office. They go out of office if they are defeated in the House on any important question, but otherwise continue unchanged till the Parliament is dissolved under the Septennial Act. Of the two well-known parties in British politics Mr. Fraser's sympathies are with the Liberals. If we accept his definition of Liberalism, its practicalization is ever so needed in India. He writes: "We may say that Liberalism is the appeal to the individual, Conservatism the appeal to authority and tradition. Liberalism has a strong faith in the capacity of the individual man. It sees clearly that the glory of man

lies in the conscious and deliberate exercise of his powers. It sees also that of all the powers which men bring into the world, the part which is used is very small, the part which is neglected is enormous. It is a protest on behalf of these neglected powers, a struggle to set them free. It seeks to cast off every influence that holds them in bondage. It values human institutions according to the individual activity they promote. It condemns all those which humiliate particular classes and deny them opportunity to rise. It believes that great gifts of mind and character are bestowed on men of every class, and it wishes to see them both used and rewarded. It wishes to throw every career open to talent; and leave every victory to be settled by competition. It follows the same rule in matters of opinion. It believes that truth emerges from a conflict of views. It despises opinions which are held only because they have been taught; and it respects those which a man has mastered and laid hold of for himself."

Newspapers in England are plentiful. There are altogether 2500 weekly and daily papers. Strange as it may seem, most Englishmen have no passion for literature and do not appreciate it. That the English are not an artistic people is, broadly speaking, as true as it is well-known.

The characteristic of the English mind is the discovery of great principles or inventions. It is not capable of descending to minute details or of giving things their most perfect form. This inferiority is due perhaps to a lack of concentration and to conservatism, as all Englishmen are at bottom conservatives, but is compensated by superior breadth and elasticity of temper. Englishmen like to think and act for themselves. They are impatient of control or interference, except in the name of some recognised authority. The Englishman is never so happy as when

he is introducing method and system where these are needed. He is not emotional, but serious and sober and lacks in lively imagination. Naturally he is reserved towards strangers. This reserve is thought, among nations of a more lively temper, to indicate more arrogance and more stupidity than really belong to the national character.

English Christians can be divided into Roman Catholics, members of the Established Church and Nonconformists. They all believe in the Triune Nature of God and in the Incarnation of Christ and differ on other comparatively unimportant points. The Catholics number only about one-fifteenth of the total population. The largest religious body is the Established Church, numbering about 13 millions. The Sovereign belongs to it and, according to its rites and by its clergy all national acts of worship are performed. The Nonconformists are divided into various

bodies, to wit, the Wesleyan Methodists, the Presbyterian Church, the Independents or Congregationalists, the Baptists and many other minor denominations. The general bent of the English mind is towards a definite religious faith, and the faith of the country for over a thousand years has been Christianity. In the present century, however various causes have combined to impair the strength of religious faith. The rapid growth of material prosperity has created an atmosphere unfavourable to it. The increase of scientific knowledge has diverted men's minds from spiritual matters, and rendered these unintelligible to them. Finally historic and scientific criticism has made it necessary to reject a good deal of what has hitherto passed undoubted on the authority of the Bible. This work of criticism is not yet finished, and nobody can say exactly what its results will be.

SPENCERIANA

GLEANINGS FROM THE ENGLISH PRESS

II

FROM his father, a schoolmaster, and a Nonconformist of pronounced type, came his strong individuality of character, his passion for freedom of thought and expression. He used boldly to declare that his father had given himself up to details, and let more important matters go by the board. This faculty for details was in full measure transmitted to the son. His affection for his mother was the deepest feeling of his life; for her comfort, as an invalid, he devised a bed which at a touch she could move in any direction. To

casual acquaintances his manners were cold and formal, to his friends he was cordial, and on occasions he could be downright jovial, telling and listening to humorous stories with unbounded glee.

* *

From his habit of dictating to an amanuensis he had come to talking "like a book," most of his sentences might well have been printed just as they fell from his lips. Once in my hearing a friend who had not seen him for years congratulated him on his good health, as evidenced by his rosy cheeks. "Do not."

said he, "converse complete with incomplete relation. Because some healthy people are ruddy, all ruddy people are considered healthy; whereas a red complexion may denote a flabby vascular system." A fair specimen, this, of how he might at any moment drop into generalisation. When he was in the critical mood, the schoolmaster in his blood came out plainly, his long, bony hand raised in objurcation seemed ready to wield a ferule, whereat I ever rejoiced that I had learned my rule-of-three under other auspices.

* *

Whatever he believed to be right, that he did, were the matter small or great. One morning in a London omnibus he happened to observe when the passenger next him paid his fair. This payment the conductor forgot, insisting on a second twopence. The passenger resisted, was arrested, and, in seeing justice done, Mr. Spencer without a murmur gave up most of a day.

* *

No author better understood how to direct assistants so as to spare himself for the sole labor of co-ordination, of digesting uncounted facts into a few underlying principles. In some of his books the chapters have much independence one of another. In collating the manuscript for the "Data of Ethics" a chapter went astray and was not missed. It duly appears in the definitive edition of the Synthetic Philosophy. In dictating a paragraph, so thorough was his grasp of fact and argument that he seemed with his mind's eye to be reading what was already written. And yet his verbal memory was poor; he could never quote

correctly more than a line or two of verse. Of books apart from those directly needed in his work he read scarcely any. A friend who lived with him ten years knew him in all that time to buy but one book.

* *

As a young man he worked so assiduously with a microscope as to injure his eyes. He was deft and dexterous in many ways; he made all his own flies when he went a fishing. He designed a capital velocimeter for engines, and he suggested composite photography long before Mr. Francis Galton produced his remarkable composite pictures. Mechanical skill and ingenuity were native with him, and as an engineer he would have excelled; but as a young man he conceived a feat of constructive interpretation which dwarfed to littleness any scheme of the engineer.

* *

I remember his once telling me that from the period of his breakdown in middle life he had never known what it was to enjoy a full natural night's rest. Joining him for work in the morning during the time of my constant association with him, I would commonly ask him how he had slept, and the best answer he ever had to give me was: "I had a very good night for me. I slept four hours."

* *

Years ago Spencer found that the effort of following ordinary conversation frequently became too much for him; but he liked to have people about him, to watch the play of expression on their faces, to feel that, though he could not himself share much in the merriment, he

was, as it were, a part of the normal and healthy social world. For this reason he objected to withdraw into solitude, and evolved a plan by which he might secure the partial isolation which he required. He had a circular spring made to go round the back of his head, and this carried pads which fitted firmly upon the ears, effectively deadening the noise about him and reducing the surrounding chatter to a mere hum. I have often seen him, stretched at length upon his couch, follow with apparent interest the gossip over the afternoon tea-cups up to a certain point, and then, reaching under his pillow, draw forth and adjust this instrument, thus suddenly detaching himself from his environment.

A quarter of an hour was quite as long as Mr. Spencer, apparently, would allow any visitor to engage his attention—that space of time reached, the visitor had to retire and leave the philosopher to recover his repose of spirit.

* * *

Mr. Spencer's usual programme was to leave his house soon after nine in the morning and direct his steps to Kensington Gardens. There he walked until nearly ten o'clock. Regularly at ten o'clock he appeared in his work-room in Leinster-place. He first dictated his correspondence. Then he turned to his systematic work, soon rising to the full tide of dictation? Usually he went on without a break till close on one o'clock, when he hurried away to luncheon.

Never did he patch, reconstruct, or begin again. The matter seemed to have been long familiar to him and only to be taking its final shape before his eyes. His works might have been printed from

his dictated manuscripts and shown no other defects than redundancies.

Almost all his reading must have taken place at odd moments—just after breakfast, after lunch, and in the afternoons at his club. Five minutes over an article or half an hour over a book availed him as much as half an hour or half a day to another man. Much was communicated to him also by his friends of eminence in science.

* * *

"During the first twelve years of my literary life," he once said, "every one of my books failed to pay for its paper, print, and advertisement, and for many years after failed to pay my small living expenses—every one of them made me poorer. Nevertheless, the forty million people constituting the nation demanded of the impoverished brain-worker five gratis copies of each. There is only one simile occurring to me which at all represents the fact, and that in but a feeble way—Dives asking alms of Lazarus."

For fifteen years he pursued his work until at last he had lost £1,200, and that was as much as he could afford. But success came in the end, and he could boast that his works had finally paid."

* * *

Mr. Miall was one of his earliest friends. He knew Spencer when he was a young engineer, just beginning to dream of a literary career. He was writing some articles for the *Non-conformist*—a sturdy organ of Nonconformity, which is now merged in another journal. Soon after Spencer was overjoyed when he got employment as sub-editor of the *Economist* at a salary of £150 a year.

CORRESPONDENCE

SHANTI ASHRAMA, CALIFORNIA

To the Editor, Prabuddha Bharata.
Sir,

On the morning of 29th of October, 1903, a party of twelve students of the Vedanta Society of San Francisco, headed by their Swami Trigunatita, started from San Jose *en route* to the Shanti Ashrama.

The ascent to the top of Mt. Hamilton was enjoyed highly by all, owing to the delightful and magnificent scenery, and after leaving the summit, the trip was still more enjoyable on account of the grand panoramic scenery which lay below us.

After passing through the Santa Isabel and San Antone valleys with their numerous cattle ranges, it was nearly sundown when we arrived at the gates of the Shanti Ashrama.

When we drove up to the dining cabin, Gurudas, the Brahmachari who is a constant resident at the Ashrama, met and hospitably greeted us.

It was a most impressive and solemn moment, bringing back most vividly to some of us the memory of our dear Swami Turiyananda, who was the founder of the Ashrama.

After several days of practical routine work, the main object of the stay was begun. Meditations were held four times daily and classes twice, both superintended by Swami Trigunatita.

The Ashrama is beautifully situated, lying in a kettle as it were, surrounded by high mountains. Absolute peace

prevails; even animal life seems to feel the gentle, peaceful and benign atmosphere of the place.

In the centre, surrounded by the tents and cabins, stands the meditation cabin, which was consecrated and dedicated to his beloved Master Sri Ramakrishna by our former Swami Turiyananda.

The students with Swami Trigunatita stayed at the Ashrama for nearly a month and the result of the great spiritual teachings that were unfolded and taught by the Swami left a permanent and deep impression on us all.

At last the day arrived when the little band had to bid adieu to the ideal life it had been leading, once again to take up the practical one.

It was indeed a solemn moment when we left the Ashrama.

The effects of this stay were conducive to the continuance of the practices taught at the Ashrama even at our homes. And we all look forward with joyful anticipations to future opportunities of again sojourning amidst the peaceful glades and harmonies of the Shanti Ashrama.

A STUDENT

San Francisco, 18th Jany., 1904

VEDANTA SOCIETY, SAN FRANCISCO

To the Editor, Prabuddha Bharata.
Sir,

On the evening of February 21, the members and friends of the San Francisco Vedanta Society assembled at the Society's headquarters, 40 Steiner St., to listen to the Sunday lecture by the Swami Trigunatita.

The rooms were unusually decorated with flowers and greens, and looked specially festive in honor of the celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's birthday.

The atmosphere was laden not only with the sweet fragrance of the garden and the woods, but also was filled with the air of devotion of the many devotees of the beloved Master who had come to hear their teacher, one of His disciples, speak feelingly of the India's Great Saint. They all had set the day apart for meditation and prayer and meditated specially that day at their homes. Some fasted the whole day and night.

One of the brightest features of the celebration was the row of young people, boys and girls, who received their Sanskrit names given by the Swami. Their faces showed a deep interest and everybody rejoiced at their good beginning.

The first part of the evening was devoted to the regular lecture of this season's series, "Psychic Powers," at the close of which, the ever-faithful "Dhira" sang the beautiful little song that Swami Vivekananda so often sang for the beloved Master Sri Ramakrishna :

"The Lord of my Soul !

1. What a charming beauty is here!
Oh, what a charming face! The Lord of my Soul has come to my (humble) abode!
2. Lo! the spring of my love is running over (with joy)!
3. O Lord of my soul! Thou who art made of love alone, is there any riches that I can offer to Thee? Accept my heart, my life, my all, yes, Lord! my all deign to accept!"

Then followed a short meditation, after which the Swami began the subject of the evening—The Life and Mission of the great Avatara of India, the blessed Ramakrishna. He gave many points shewing His grand and extraordinary life. Each Incarnation had his special work to accomplish and Sri Ramakrishna came to prove the reality and grandeur of all the religions of the world. He was the greatest Prophet the world has yet been given since the time of Sri Krishna.

When the lecture was closed, each one went away with a deeper love and faith, inspired by the recounting of the Holy Life.

R.

Berkeley, California, March 2, 1904.

NEW YORK VEDANTA SOCIETY

To the Editor, Prabuddha Bharata.
Sir,

As in India, the special celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's Birthday for the Vedanta Society and its close adherents was held on Thursday, February 18th., while the public observance of the anniversary took place the following Sunday at the Carnegie Lyceum when the Swami Abhedananda delivered an eloquent lecture on the Blessed Master under the title of "A Real Mahatman." Never before had he portrayed the Master and His teachings in so stirring a manner and every one in the large audience listened to his words with rapt attention and in some cases with deep emotion.

At the celebration proper this attitude of devotion and love was even more

evident. On and around the altar, placed as always on the platform under Ramakrishna's picture, it was not possible to find room for the many offerings of flowers and fruit brought by students and friends, and all who came seemed filled with a new spirit of reverence and worship. The service, which began at 11 and which was conducted by Swami Abhedananda, consisted of the usual chanting, prayer, meditation and the reading of the Holy Master's praises. At half past twelve there was an intermission until one, when for two hours Swami Abhedananda chanted the praises of Divine Mother before the altar, and from half past three until five there were further devotional exercises led by Swami Nirmalananda.

A certain number still remained before the shrine in meditation until seven when the Swami Abhedananda opened the evening service by reading an account of Ramakrishna's life with extracts from His Sayings, after which he gave an address on the value and significance of His teachings, which made a profound impression on all who heard him.

The results are already manifest in an increase of activity and interest in every department of the Society's work. An immediate outcome has been a definite effort to establish a Vedanta centre in Brooklyn. The first step to this end was taken last evening when the Swami Abhedananda delivered a public lecture there on "The Universal Religion of Vedanta." The hall was crowded to the doors and great admiration and enthusiasm were shown for the Swami's brilliant exposition of the principles of Vedanta. A second lecture

on "The Mystery of the Soul" will be given next week and it is then probable that a Yoga class will be formed and a branch of the Society organized. The charge of this may be entrusted to the Swami Nirmalananda, who has also in great measure assumed the direction of the Yoga classes at the Society in order that Swami Abhedananda may be left free to accept invitations to lectures elsewhere.

His lecture at Cornell on February 24th was attended by some three hundred students and professors and aroused such interest that he was requested on the following afternoon to hold a conference at the house of Professor Hiram Corson whose guest he was. The leading journal of Ithica referred to his lecture in these terms :

"Those who heard the celebrated Swami Abhedananda lecture in Barnes Hall last evening on "The Vedanta Philosophy and Religion" were deeply impressed by the ability and appearance of the speaker.....The Swami surprised the audience by his marvellous command of English. It was the unanimous testimony of those who heard him that seldom has an American speaker at Cornell displayed such fluency and polish in using his native tongue as did this Hindu preacher. He described the famous philosophy of the Brahmin cult with rare sympathy and power."

The public course of lectures at Carnegie Lyceum has closed for the season and during March and April religious services will be held on Sunday morning in the Society House.

L. F. GLENN

New York, 11th March, 1904

NEWS AND NOTES

MORE steel is used in the manufacture of pens than in all the sword and gun factories in the world.

ON a tombstone at the head of a grave in one of the dog cemeteries in Paris is this inscription to the memory of a brave St. Bernard: "He saved the lives of forty persons, and was killed by the forty-first."

ASBESTOS towels are among the latest novelties. They do not require soap and water to cleanse them. When soiled it is said that they may be thrown in the fire, and in a few minutes are ready to be drawn out fresh and clean!

EXTRAORDINARY qualities are possessed by the River Tinto in Spain. It hardens and petrifies the sand of its bed; and if a stone falls in the stream and alights upon another, in a few months they unite and become one stone. Fish cannot live in its waters.

A CONTEMPORARY'S correspondent relates the curious experience of a member of the Thibetan Mission. He found something black in his despatch box among important papers. When it turned out to be frozen ink, he reverently thanked his stars that there had been no thaw.

THE chief secret of memory is interest. You remember what you are interested in, and the wider your circle of interest is, the better and richer is your memory. It is the self-centred—a word, by the way, which is by no means identical with selfish—who

remember least.—"Claudius Clear," in the *British Weekly*.

IN Nagasaki (Japan) there is a fire-works maker who manufactures pyrotechnic birds of great size that, when exploded, sail in a life-like manner through the air and perform many movements exactly like those of living birds. The secret of making these wonderful things has been in the possession of the oldest child of the family each generation for more than 400 years.

LARCHMONT, a fashionable suburb of New York City, has the distinction of possessing a volunteer fire brigade quite uncommon in the fact of its being composed of wealthy citizens—several of them millionaires. The brigade is no ornamental time-killing organization, but a very efficient fighting force, and one of the most effective volunteer fire combinations in America. Here the trust magnate vies with his clerk, the landed proprietor with his labourer.

AT LE PONT, in the Canton of Vaud, Switzerland, twenty-five persons while at a rifle match were struck and knocked over by lightning, which played along an electric-bell wire. No one was killed, but several men were badly injured, falling senseless, and being revived with difficulty. On the bodies of the twenty-five persons were afterwards found photographs of fir trees. The lightning had imprinted on the skin of those whom it struck views of the wood behind the shooting range.

THE River Mississippi boasts a floating theatre capable of holding 1,000 people. Alongside the river towns occur

every thirty or forty miles or less, giving ample time to steam from one to the other without missing a single performance. By the aid of a steam hooter it gives ample warning of its approach. The audience awaits it on the bank, and almost before the anchor is down everything is ready to begin. The opera boat gives, it is said, performances of the highest class, and thinks nothing of producing "Faust" in the middle of the Mississippi.

JUST outside the village of Freeville, in the state of New York, there flourishes a young republic. It is composed of about 500 boys and girls between the ages of twelve and twenty-one. This "republic within a republic" is called the George Junior Republic. It was established by Mr. William R. George, an enthusiastic young Sunday-school worker and missionary among the poor boys and girls of the city of New York. It is not an institution or a charity organization, but a free republic where the young citizens make their own laws and execute them, where there are a gaol and a school, police men and judges and juries, a president and a congress, hotels and restaurants, high priced and low priced.

MUCH virtue often attaches to name, but in the case of the so-called pearl-oyster we have to disabuse our mind of any lingering belief that it is a true oyster, since, says "Knowledge," as a matter of fact the animal belongs to the family, "Aviculidæ," and is therefore more nearly related to the mussels than to the oysters of British seas. One character in particular marks it off from

the oyster genus—namely, the ownership of a "byssus," or bundle of tough threads, by means of which it can tag itself on to rocks or other adjacent objects as do its congeners the mussels. The species has favoured Ceylon waters or, more strictly, the shores of the Gulf of Manaar on the north-west, in countless generations from remote antiquity, hence long prior to European rule. As regards pearl-formation, some pearls or pearly excrescences on the interior of the shell were detected as being due to the irritation caused by boring sponges and burrowing worms, but the minute grains of sand or other internal particles popularly supposed to form the nuclei of pearls are considered only to do so under exceptional circumstances. The majority of the best gems, on the contrary, are caused by the stimulation of a parasitic worm which becomes encased and dies.

A PORTRAIT

Silly girl! Yet morning lies
In the candour of your eyes,
And you turn your creamy neck,
Which the stray eurl-shadows fleck,
Far more wisely than you guess,
Spite your not-unconscious dress.
In the curving of your lips
Sages' cunning finds eclipse,
For the gleam of laughing teeth
Is the force that works beneath,
And the warmth of your white hand
Needs a God to understand.
Yea, the stars are not so high
As your body's mystery,
And the sea is not so deep
As the soul in you asleep.

—*Israel Zangwill*